(c):

The following six projects have been posed to ADB for funding:

1. Third line between Bilaspur and Bhilai (132 Km.)

2. Banspani-Tomka New Line including electrification (155 Km)

3. Bombay Division (CR) - Conversion of DC to AC system.

4. Bombay Division (WR) - Conversion of DC to AC system.

5. Third line between Sonua and Manoharpur (40 Km)

6. Haridaspur-Paradeep New Line Project (78 Km)

The feasibility study report of these projects have already been sent to ADB. ADB's response is awaited.

A project for improvement of signalling between Ghaziabad and Kanpur has been posed, through the Ministry of Finance, to KFW, Germany. They have conducted a feasibility study.

Expansion of Railways in backward regions

826. SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have for the first time accorded priority for expansion of Railways in the backward regions of North-East, J&K, Bihar, Kutch, Panch Mahal, Andhra Pradesh etc.;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the scheme on priority basis has not been taken up for the development of backward rural areas of Gujarat, especially Panch Mahal and Kutch regions;

(c) if so, whether Government propose to take up the expansion programme in the near future; and

(d) if not the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The policy of the Govt. is to accord priority to the development of rail infrastructure in backward areas particularly in the NE Region.

(c) The Govt. have included several new projects all over the country for expansion of rail network, details of which are printed in the budget documents provided to all Members of the House.

(d) Does not arise.

Special trains between Madras-Delhi

827. SHRI O.S. MANIAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to run special trains on daily basis between Madras-Delhi to clear the summer rush during April-June; and

(b) if so, whether Government also propose to introduce at least one superfast train on all days of the week between Delhi-Madras in view of the heavy traffic on this route;

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) and (b) At present there is no such proposal. However, a close watch on the traffic is being kept and if justified special trains from Nizamuddin to Madras will be run.

Response of investors to the BOLT Scheme

828. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the response from investors to the "build-own-lease-transfer" (BOLT) scheme of the Railways has been very poor during the past few years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government propose to make amendment to the BOLT scheme to encourage investors: and